

Attorney Docket No.: 0180124

In the Claims:**Claims 1-15 (canceled).**

Claim 16 (original): A test structure for determining electromigration and interlayer dielectric failure, said test structure comprising:

a first metal line situated in a metal layer of said test structure;

a second metal line situated adjacent and substantially parallel to said first metal line, said second metal line being separated from said first metal line by a first distance, said first distance being substantially equal to a minimum design rule separation distance;

a metal band surrounding said first metal line and said second metal line;

an interlayer dielectric layer situated between said first metal line and said second metal line, said first metal line and said metal band, and said second metal line and said metal band;

wherein said electromigration failure is determined when a first resistance of said first metal line or a second resistance of said second metal line is greater than a predetermined resistance, and wherein said interlayer dielectric failure is determined when a first current is detected between said first metal line and said second metal line.

Claim 17 (original): The test structure of claim 16 wherein said interlayer dielectric failure is determined when a second current is detected between said first metal

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line and said metal band or a third current is detected between said second metal line and said metal band.

Claim 18 (original): The test structure of claim 16 wherein said first metal line has a first width and said second metal line has a second width, said first width and said second width being substantially equal to a minimum design rule width.

Claim 19 (original): The test structure of claim 16 wherein said first metal line comprises a second current flowing in a first direction and said second metal line comprises a third current flowing in a second direction, wherein said first direction is opposed to said second direction.

Claim 20 (original): The test structure of claim 16 wherein said interlayer dielectric layer comprises a low-k dielectric.

Claim 21 (new): A test structure for determining electromigration and interlayer dielectric failure, said test structure comprising:

- a first metal line situated in a metal layer of said test structure;
- a second metal line situated adjacent and substantially parallel to said first metal line, said second metal line being separated from said first metal line by a first distance, said first distance being substantially equal to a minimum design rule separation distance;

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an interlayer dielectric layer situated between said first metal line and said second metal line;

a metal band surrounding said first metal line and said second metal line, said interlayer dielectric layer being situated between said metal band and said first metal line and between said metal band and said second metal line;

wherein said electromigration failure is determined when a first resistance of said first metal line or a second resistance of said second metal line is greater than a predetermined resistance, and wherein said interlayer dielectric failure is determined when a first current is detected between said first metal line and said second metal line, a second current is detected between said first metal line and said metal band, or a third current is detected between said second metal line and said metal band.

Claim 22 (new): The test structure of claim 21 wherein said metal band is situated a second distance from said first metal line and a third distance from said second metal line, said second distance and said third distance being substantially equal to said minimum design rule separation distance.

Claim 23 (new): A test structure for determining electromigration and interlayer dielectric failure, said test structure comprising a first metal line situated in a metal layer of said test structure, said test structure being characterized by:

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a second metal line situated adjacent and substantially parallel to said first metal line, said second metal being separated from said first metal line by a first distance, said first distance being substantially equal to a minimum design rule separation distance, an interlayer dielectric layer situated between said first metal line and said second metal line, a metal band surrounding said first metal line and said second metal line, said interlayer dielectric layer being situated between said metal band and said first metal line and between said metal band and said second metal line, wherein said electromigration failure is determined when a first resistance of said first metal line or a second resistance of said second metal line is greater than a predetermined resistance, and wherein said interlayer dielectric failure is determined when a first current is detected between said first metal line and said second metal line, a second current is detected between said first metal line and said metal band, or a third current is detected between said second metal line and said metal band.

Claim 24 (new): The test structure of claim 23 wherein said metal band is situated a second distance from said first metal line and a third distance from said second metal line, said second distance and said third distance being substantially equal to said minimum design rule separation distance.